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MEMORIAL MEETING AT THE FIRST CHURCH,
CAMBRIDGE, MASS., MARCH 10, 1907.

ON Sunday afternoon, March 10, 1907, at 4 o'clock, a meeting in memory of William Wells Newell was held in the First (Unitarian) Church, of which his father was for many years the minister, and of which he was himself a member. The meeting was well attended, many men of science and letters being present. The minister of the church, Rev. S. M. Crothers, presided and spoke a few words of appreciation and sympathy. The principal addresses were made by Colonel T. W. Higginson (for the Authors Club of Boston), Professor Franz Boas of Columbia University, New York (for the American Anthropological Association), Professor C. H. Toy of Harvard University (for the Study of Religions Club). Mr. Higginson read a letter from Rev. Edward Everett Hale telling of the good thoughts and deeds of Mr. Newell, whose loss to philanthropy and kindred activities he never ceased to deplore. Professor R. B. Dixon of Harvard University read a letter from Professor F. W. Putnam, whose state of health prevented his attendance. Professor Putnam paid tribute to Mr. Newell's enthusiasm and zealous labors in connection with the founding and the work of the American Folk-Lore Society.

Colonel Higginson spoke first of Mr. Newell's ancestry in New England and Old England. His father was a Unitarian minister and for many years pastor of the First Church in Cambridge; his maternal grandfather was a schoolmaster of the good old type, one of the first educators, it appears, to bring Spanish boys from the South to be given the benefit of an English training. These associations counted for not a little in his character and achievements. He then told of his own associations with him in the Authors Club and elsewhere. Mr. Newell always had the literary instinct and the poetic spirit, and one almost wishes that he had devoted himself entirely to letters. But this could not be. In the Authors Club he took part not only in the literary exercises and discussions, where his great knowledge and wide reading were of such value, but was prominent in the social activities of the society, its outings, picnics, etc. He had the art of getting along with people, as well as the temperament and the equipment of the scholar. In his "Translations" and his little book "Words for Music" may be seen some of what he has accomplished in the way of literature.

The letter from *Rev. Edward Everett Hale* read by Colonel Higginson is as follows:—

WASHINGTON, March 3, 1907.

MY DEAR HIGGINSON, — I cannot be at the memorial service which will, I hope, leave some permanent record of our friend Will Newell.

If I had my way he would have survived me by twenty years, and I was sorry when I found I was never to talk with him again. When he left college in the midst of the way he was my assistant for some months, and never was a good fellow so devoted to the business of lifting up those who have fallen down as he. He was absolutely unselfish, I hated to lose him, but the country called and he left me for sanitary service. Here was the beginning, however, of warm personal attachment, which will always continue on both sides. He was very much beloved in Germantown, where he was minister for some time, and I have always heard that his school was admirable. Well it might be, for he was, as I suppose, a well-nigh perfect classical scholar.

I am such a Philistine that I have always begrudged to the Folk-Lore Society their capture of a man of such ability. But he has shown what is the value of enthusiasm in such work. If I had stood over him with a whip, — as the laws of the country do not permit, — I would have made him write more poetry. When the country choirs of America from Eastport to Tiajuana sing "*Adeste Fideles*" in English, they are, without knowing it, using the English words as he wrote them down.

Always truly yours,

(Signed) EDW. E. HALE.

Professor Franz Boas said: For many years I have had the good fortune to be closely associated with Mr. Newell in those lines of his work which relate to the study of folk-lore and anthropology, and to-day, in recalling the years of our friendship, the personal loss demands expression before we can give thought to what the sciences have lost to which he devoted his life and energies. His ready sympathy, his whole-souled devotion to his ideals, his simple and unhesitating acceptance of every call of duty, his inspiring enthusiasm, have been a constant help to his friends, a stimulus to wholesome activity.

Few are the men whose influence upon scientific thought is so closely connected with their personality as Mr. Newell's. He was not one of those who, in their enthusiasm for facts, are likely to forget the objects which the newly discovered data are to serve, and whose departure from the field of science comes to signify the loss of a powerful centre of activity, through whose agency many valuable treasures may have been acquired, but whose personality has disappeared behind the urgent demands of action. His was the power of directing the thoughts of students into the channels of his own mind,

by means of the influence of his personality and of his enthusiasm, and of increasing and directing their thirst for new information. What he achieved is not so much due to what he did, as to what he was.

Thus it has happened that Mr. Newell, although a man of literary inclinations, came to be a power in the field of anthropology. His first and most remarkable achievement, the foundation of the Folk-Lore Society, brought him into close contact, not only with the student of European folk-lore, of which field he himself was master, but also with the students of primitive tribes, and, without assuming to become an anthropologist, he exerted a lasting influence upon many investigators. Twenty years ago, when his interests were first turned in this direction, anthropology was almost exclusively in the hands of men originally trained in the study of the natural sciences, and this determined the standpoint from which the phenomena of anthropology were viewed. Exactness of description, on the one hand, the establishment of broad evolutionary principles on the other, were the guiding thoughts of students. The history of culture as a historical and truly psychological phenomenon was a thought that remained to be developed.

Mr. Newell's interests were aroused from entirely different points of view. His studies in the history of literature and folk-lore enabled him to perceive at a glance the historical elements in primitive culture, more particularly in the field of primitive lore and art, and to see that the gulf between the mental life of primitive man and civilized man, or between the mental life of races that many students had constructed, had no existence in reality. His own artistic temper which permitted him to feel with the poet, and his human sympathy which led him to follow up the gradual spread of artistic productions among the people, together with his fund of historic knowledge, enabled him to see things that had been hidden from the eyes of anthropologists.

To understand him aright we must also not forget the broad humanitarian basis of his scientific interests. If it had been only the knowledge of remarkable forms of beliefs of foreign races, he might have been an interested spectator, but he would hardly have thrown as much energy into the work of inspiring students with the necessity of saving the vanishing remains of such beliefs, and of recording what still exists in full vigor. The strongest appeal to his sympathies lay in the light shed upon the fundamental values of culture by a close study of beliefs, customs, tales, and arts of foreign races; in the ability given by this study of appreciating the strength and weaknesses of our own culture, and in its tendency to correct the overbearing self-sufficiency of modern civilization.

He never formulated his views in writing; but in animated discus-

sions the analogies between primitive lore and that of Europe, the need of applying the well-grounded principles developed in literary research, the necessity of viewing many expressions of primitive thought as the artistic or philosophic expression of popular ideas formulated by artists or thinkers of high rank, were with him an inexhaustible topic, and he impressed his views upon the listener by the force of the vivacity of his temperament, and of the enthusiastic reliance on the correctness of his principles.

Thus it came to pass that he set anthropologists thinking in new lines, that he added new recruits to our ranks, and that he pressed one after another of us into his service, and thus led in the work of making room in anthropology for a broad historical viewpoint.

Considering that he was not a professional teacher, nor a writer on anthropological subjects, in the narrower sense of the term, his success and his influence seem marvelous to him who did not know him. Such success is given only to him who by his own mental vigor overcomes all resistance, whose faith in his own work carries conviction.

It is left to us to see that his work may live; and our task has been made easy by him, for those ideas for which he stood have taken firm hold. May his memory help us to follow in his steps.

On behalf of the History of Religions Club *Professor C. H. Toy* said: "Mr. Newell was a member of the Club from its beginning in 1891, ever took great interest in it, rarely missing a meeting. He presented to the Club a number of papers on such points as the rôle of the sun-god among the North American Indians, and the survival of heathen customs and ideas in mediæval European Christianity; all that he wrote was carefully prepared and illustrated with learning and reflection. His wide reading and his grasp of the method of historical research enabled him also to take part in the discussion of other topics presented in the Club, even when the field was relatively remote from his own; it was rare that he was unable to produce parallels that threw light on the general subject. In discussion, while he ably maintained his own views, he was always ready to give respectful consideration to those of others. He entered with zest into the social side of the meetings; he was enthusiastic and hearty, uniformly cheerful, sometimes with what approached gayety, and he enjoyed fun, humor, and wit. It was absence of self-consciousness that lay at the bottom of his spirit of good fellowship. His attitude was impersonal, the opposite of self-regarding. He was one of the most unselfish of men, ever ready to give of his stores, disposed to efface himself, holding himself in a real sense to be the servant of men. The members of the Club will hold him, along with Allen,

Everett, and Greenough, in affectionate remembrance as a faithful friend, a true comrade, and a man whose life was devoted to the pursuit of truth and the doing of good."

The following letter from *Professor F. W. Putnam* was read by Dr. Roland B. Dixon :—

March 8, 1907.

DR. ROLAND B. DIXON, President of the American Folk-Lore Society.

Dear Mr. Dixon,—I regret most deeply that the present state of my health will not permit of my being present at the meeting to be held on Sunday next, in memory of Mr. William Wells Newell.

Since Mr. Newell founded the American Folk-Lore Society, in 1888, it has been my privilege to be associated with him and his life work. His plan for the Society, from the first, was to make it an organization of the broadest scope, and to enlist workers from all parts of our country. For this purpose he proposed—and fostered by every means in his power—the formation of branch societies. Wherever he could discover a person interested in any line of research coming within the scope of the Society, he encouraged that person to form a branch society in his or her locality for the investigation and preservation of local folk-lore. For the latter purpose he, at the very beginning, started the publication of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, which in its early days was largely sustained by his indefatigable labors and his personal contributions, both literary and pecuniary.

Mr Newell recognized the importance of tracing and securing the survivals of the folk-lore of the Old World brought to America from many lands, and he therefore urged the collecting of stories and sayings common to people of old or isolated communities. He also realized the desirability of securing the stories and songs of the negro population of the South as a means of following the transference of negro-lore from Africa and of studying the variants of many of the stories.

In addition to these important studies in relation to the source of what has become American folk-lore, Mr. Newell felt the necessity of making a careful study of the myths, religion, and stories of the American Indians as a source of important deductions connected with the ethnography of the native peoples of America. In this research he took a lively interest and always did what he could for the furtherance of such investigations.

Many pages in the nineteen volumes of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* show how earnestly he worked in this line and how he gradually brought to his fold the ethnologists of the country. It was especially in connection with this research that I became inti-

mately associated with him and coöperated with him in the establishment of the Boston Branch of the Society in 1889.

During these eighteen years it has been my good fortune to see much of Mr. Newell and to know him as a man of culture, of integrity, of most unselfish character, of a warm heart, and a most lovable nature. He was a true friend, always ready to help others without thought of personal gain, and fired with indignation whenever an act of selfishness or injustice came to his notice ; he was beloved by all who knew him intimately ; he will be greatly missed from our councils.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) F. W. PUTNAM,

President of the Boston Branch of the American Folk-Lore Society.

The meeting was closed with a few appropriate words by Rev. Samuel M. Crothers, who also read a brief poem by Mr. Newell.